



SECURE COMMONWEALTH PANEL

October 27, 2010
State Capitol

Attendees: Terrie Suit, Michael Hardy, Eric Casey, Carrie Cantrell, Paul Conway, Cathie Hutchins, Aaron Mathes, Michael Guevremont, Marissa Levine, Kelly Hobbs, Jim Horton, Algie Howell, Joe Inge, Edward Macon, Dario Marquez, Anna McRay, Bert Mizusawa, John O'Bannon, Jim Redick, Cynthia Romero-Munoz, Norris Royston, Beverly Sherwood, Margaret Vanderhye, David Waldman, John Watkins, Barclay Winn

Welcoming Remarks

Terrie L. Suit, Chair, opened the meeting by thanking all for attending and welcoming them to the Capitol.

Medical Countermeasure/Mass Prophylaxis Distribution and Dispensing

Dr. Marissa Levine, Virginia Department of Health

(Please see presentation and handouts)

Chairwoman Suit complemented the Health Department on always having valuable information.

Chairwoman Suit was recently in Washington DC attending a Senate staff briefing hosted by the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs on the newly adopted National Capital Region Homeland Security Strategic Plan. This plan represents the National Capital Region's strategy for improving regional preparedness to address critical risks in the Region. The National Capital Region encompasses the District of Columbia and parts of Maryland and Virginia. One of the questions being asked at the briefing involved hospital surge capabilities.

In Northern Virginia, Inova Fairfax coordinates among the region's 14 hospitals as a Regional Hospital Coordination Center. All have hospital surge plans in place that account for a ~20% surge above staffed beds. The challenge arises when we need to go beyond what is planned internal to hospitals. Alternate Care Centers (ACC) may be required in a large, major disaster, such as in an area-wide aerosolized anthrax attack. In such cases, unresolved questions include those related to ACC management, resource provision, staffing and liability protections. All these concerns continue to need to

be discussed among local governments, their Chief Administrative Officers, hospital CEOs, EMS directors and local health directors.

External (state and federal) support will likely arrive at a disaster zone within 36- 48 hours, but in the first 24 to 36 hours vulnerabilities will exist. Localities must work closely with their health directors and Chief Administrative Officer on the community medical surge process.

Bob Mauskopf and Dr. Marissa Levine from the Department of Health will provide a one page information sheet on this topic (please see attached).

A question was asked about exercises. Bob Mauskopf responded local health departments exercise at least three times a year; the Virginia Department of Health has one statewide annual exercise always threat based and always including mass prophylaxis distribution/ and dispensing. Product form CDC's Strategic national Stockpile has been brought in every year over the past 5 or 6 years.

A question was asked on a large event like hurricane Katrina or an aerosol event, how are you able to control all the resources or do you control the resources.

Bob Mauskopf responded in emergencies, the Virginia Department of Health coordinates health and medical response including resourcing with Coordinator of Emergency Management Michael Cline. The health department is responsible for Emergency Support Function 8 (Health and Medical) and supports Emergency Support Function 6 (Mass Care) and is active at all emergencies and state exercises at the Virginia Emergency Operations Center.

A question was asked about vulnerable populations, disabled people and the possibility of them being abandoned during a truly large disaster.

The Hampton Roads Urban Area Security Initiative is looking at developing a database for such individuals. However, this database is self-select and up to the individual if they want to go in this system. There are concerns over privacy. Dr. Levine chairs a state inter-agency committee addressing emergency requirements for vulnerable populations. It includes participation from Department of Aging and Department of Social Services.

Chairwoman Suit asked Michael Cline to provide the panel a presentation on the emergency management system at their next meeting.

Chairwoman Suit also mentioned the Cabinet Tabletop exercise the Governor will be participating in with his Cabinet next week on the continuity of operations plans, emergency processes, and how it all comes together. It will be a great overview for the new Cabinet.

Chairwoman Suit asked the panel and audience to introduce themselves.

Chairwoman Suit also mentioned a Behavioral Study that the National Capital Region completed on citizen readiness. The study can be found at http://www.vaemergency.com/library/behavior_study/index.cfm.

State Emergency Responder Credential

Duane Stafford, Office of Commonwealth Preparedness

(Please see presentation)

A question was asked about legislators obtaining these credentials? This is a subject for one of our sub panels to review, but for now there is no funding.

In the future, the Governor's Cabinet will be getting credentials as part of the continuity of government. Chairwoman Suit also mentioned the Virginia Military Advisory Council, in which she co-chairs, is looking into military installations mutual aid agreement with local governments. Chairwoman Suit and her office just had a meeting with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency on these types of vulnerabilities. The Council will be reviewing these agreements and beginning the effort to standardize them.

Chairwoman Suit was asked about a credential for the panel. All depends on funding for the future. Our office applies every year for grant funding to sustain and grow the program. For the past 5 years, the cost has decreased which is great news.

Sub Panel Update

Mike McAllister, Office of Commonwealth Preparedness

(Please review handouts)

The sub panels are what drive the Secure Commonwealth Panel and provide recommendations on policies, legislation, executive orders, etc. So it is important for these groups to meet and be active. The sub panels are the think tank who elevate issues to the full panel.

Sub panels usually meet in-between the Secure Commonwealth Panel meetings.

The Commonwealth Preparedness Working Group will support the work of these sub panels. The membership of the working group will expand to have local community and private sector joined the group in the future. The working group members are viewed as subject matter experts.

Health and Medical Sub Panel would like to change their name to Health and Human Resources. Chairwoman Suit approved.

The sub panels will have authority to change objectives and delete or add new ones.

Closing Remarks

Chairwoman Suit

The December meeting has been canceled to give the sub panels more time to meet. The next meeting of the Secure Commonwealth Panel is April 27.

Chairwoman Suit read to the panel the news release about Farooque Ahmed arrested for attempting to assist others in planning to conduct terrorist activities against the Metrorail system.

Chairwoman Suit emphasized that threats are real. Recently a report was released outlining how to put a lawnmower blade on a truck and mow people down in the street. Information sharing and reporting is vitally important.

Captain Lambert, Virginia Fusion Center, spoke on the recent discharge of fire arms at the Pentagon, Marine Corps Museum, and a recruiting station in Fairfax. The Joint Terrorism Task Force is involved and leading the effort. They are on alert with the upcoming Marine Corps Marathon.

Chairwoman Suit updated the panel on homeland security grant funding. Her office makes the recommendations to the Governor on the distribution of grant funding from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Grant Program. Last year, Virginia received \$18 million. In 2006, the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness was codified in legislation. One of the duties of the office is to craft a formula for grant funding focusing on threat and risk. This year we will be beta testing the formula we developed and will roll it out for the next grant cycle next year.

The Senior Policy Group (Terrie Suit and her deputies and Michael Cline and his deputies) will be reviewing all grant applications, participants will be able to present their grant application personally to the group, and then the group will decide on the programs being funded and send to the Governor. Every grant will get an unbiased consideration.

Chairwoman Suit announced that Fort Lee and Fort A.P Hill are working on an arrangement to move troops back and forth from each military installation on a train for training sessions. They have offered the state the use of the train in case it is needed to evacuate from the Hampton Roads region during a hurricane. \$100,000 annual appropriations is needed to fund this initiative. Unfortunately, state grant funds are not allowed to pay for Department of Defense projects. Chairwoman Suit asked the legislators present if they would support a budget item for this project in the general assembly.

Chairwoman Suit announced that the relocation site for the Cabinet during times of disasters is getting wireless internet capability.

The Winter Preparedness report is being updated and will be shared with the panel prior to sending to the Governor by December.

With the November elections, security clearances will be backlogged. The Office of Commonwealth Preparedness is trying to submit local government clearance packages as soon as possible to not get caught in the backlog that will be coming.

Meeting adjourned.